Looking at the ‘Other’ through the Ear: 
Contemporary Traces of Protectorate Politics 
through Music

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Inspired by Kenbib’s Les Protégés (1996) this article will develop an exploration of the way Spanish protectorate scholars used musicology to “look” at their Jewish protégés in Morocco and how traces of this scholarly gaze remain in place until today. Through an exploration of various works from the time of the protectorate and others from after Independence, I will show how protectorate tropes continue to operate within the manners in which the Spanish study and sometimes ignore the music of Moroccan Jews. Some will claim Jewish music for their own nationalistic projects, others disengage from Moroccan Jewish repertoires, showing a general political indifference towards the cultural and intellectual particularity of Jews and most importantly the very Moroccan experience of their musical expression.

In Mohammed Kenbib’s seminal work Les Protégés, the process and mechanism through which European governments began establishing footholds in Morocco during the mid-19th century is explained. What Kenbib describes as a conquête pacifique, peacetime conquest – used diplomacy as its arm of choice.¹ The system that began in the middle of the nineteenth century of acquiring protégés amongst the population showed immediate consequences within the Jewish population regarding trade and diplomacy. However, culture and education ran in an equally important and influential parallel course for this conquest. Adding further complexity to the relationship between colonial governments and the Moroccan population was the triangulation that occurred between foreign Jewish organisations, notably in France, Britain and America, local Jews and the Moroccan Mahkzen.²

The foothold of the Protectorate governments into Moroccan society was not just diplomatic, economic and political but also used cultural appropriation and indoctrination as well as an effort to transform future generations of Muslims and Jews through European education. This chapter will explore the manners in which music and its study were used by Spanish scholars of music during this period and the continuity of some of these patterns that are still set in motion in the way that Moroccan Jewish music is perceived, studied and performed today.

Communication in the Maghreb is often indirect. The private performance of music as well as its public performative nature often allow both hidden and overt messages to be made explicit between musicians and audience during performance. Oral traditions, musical and other, have traditionally served a larger communal purpose erasing the individuality of those who transmit this knowledge in the community. This primordial communicative function is what makes music making intrinsically important to society, and particularly to minorities in this region.


In Morocco, this aspect of encoded communication in music-making has been instrumentalised by professional and amateur performers as well as by governmental agencies and diplomatic missions. Through music and song, the acoustic as described by musicologist Suzanne Cusick has been used by various agents in Morocco:

“(…) human subjectivity is produced through the interaction of sensory reception and sensory perceptible response (…). Thus do we turn space into place, and place into intelligible, navigable worlds (…) we are interpolated in a symbolic order, into language and into social relations.”

From the early-XXth century until today, various political actors used the continuous embedding of cultural belonging through sustained musical cultural diplomacy efforts in theatres and consulates in addition to the daily subtle forms of interaction and influence that happen when living side by side. However, the description of these efforts by audience members, musicians and even officials themselves are entangled with their personal and national stories of belonging.

**Spain and the Spanish**

**Performances in the Public Sphere**

In 1879 the Spanish writers Llana and Rodrigañez bemoaned the fact that there were no public theatres in Morocco, implying that the lack of theatre meant that there was no refined musical performance.

“Since women don’t assist to any parties or public diversion, naturally the main reason for their existence is lacking; so because of this throughout the empire there are no theatres or bull rings, reducing all public distractions to those offered by puppeteers and acrobats that are on the streets and dancers and singers that recite stories and a certain type of romance.”

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6. No asistiendo las mujeres a ninguna fiesta ni diversión en público ha de faltar naturalmente el principal aliciente de todo espectáculo; así es, que en el imperio ni existen teatros ni plazas de toros, reduciéndose todas las distracciones públicas a las que ofrecen los titiriteros y saltimbanques que recorren las calles y a los bailarines y cantores que recitan cuentos y cierta especie de romances, p. 124. D. Manuel G. Llana and D. Tirso Rodrigañez. *El Imperio de Marruecos* (Madrid: Imprenta de José de Rojas, 1879).
It is important to note that there is a gendered aspect in this statement, and that the authors assumed that since women were not present in public events it meant that diversions and cultural productions were limited to street performers. It appears that they were oblivious to the rich musical and theatrical performances happening behind the walls of people’s homes, in their private quarters and in semi-public spaces where weddings and other life-cycle events were held with musicians, dancers and mixed audiences. It also hints to a perception that these venues of performance and reception of music and theatre did not fit within their hierarchies of performances to be valued. There are however, numerous foreign accounts of mixed gender musical performances behind closed doors from the XIXth century in both text and iconography, the most famous probably being Delcroix’s 1839 painting of *Noce juive au Maroc*, capturing a Jewish wedding he went to in Tangier during his voyage in 1832 and which is today exhibited at the Louvre. Notwithstanding, the hierarchy of valued musical performances for European ears remained those that were staged in public theatres or even in private salons of homes outside the medina in the Ville Nouvelles of Protectorate cities. These homes had European furniture, their inhabitants wore European clothes and spoke European languages. On occasion, they were Jewish, who as some of the first protégés and consular representatives, early on straddled the divide between colonizer and indigene.

In the early years of the Protectorate, Spanish theatres were built and programs bringing the latest stars from the Peninsula transformed the cultural life of northern Morocco. In 1913, the Teatro Cervantes was inaugurated in Tangier, with the idea to bring Spanish performances to Tangier and make an important cultural imprint on the city. However, the lack of a public theatre culture in this society, meant that promoters and producers were hard hit, never quite recuperating their investment. Theatres would fill up when the event was free, but if the producer had to rely solely on ticket sales, they would quickly fold. In October of 1916, the correspondence between one such producer in Tangier and the Spanish government showed him asking for a subsidy to continue programming Spanish performances. A diplomatic agent of the Spanish government called it a
“powerful element of influence, not to be underappreciated during these moments in which all sacrifice to maintain Spanish interests is small. The competition is acute, and we are faced with an impending crisis which will certainly determine the critical situation of Tangier.”

When the government in Madrid delayed their answer, the promoter presented them with his only other option for financial stability: renting his theatre out to a French company. The swift response from the Ministry of State urged him to make a “patriotic” decision and not rent out to the Frenchman as that would “... fail the patriotic purpose for which this coliseum was erected.”

He was urged to continue programming Spanish programming, even at a financial loss.

The Cervantes, the Teatro Español in Tetuan and other theatres in Spanish protectorate cities, were hubs for performances of zarzuela, coplas, flamenco and Spanish plays from the Peninsula and by local troupes. Not only were high profile professional productions presented, but schools and even Jewish community events such as comedic plays for Purim used the theatre. Decades after the Spanish protectorate was over, in 1971 when the Theatre was barely used anymore, one of the last productions was “Marianela” directed by the Tangier Sephardi Alberto Pimienta. By 1993, the newly inaugurated Cervantes Institute in Tangier held a last photographic exhibit within the decaying theatre. It could appear that the superposition of the activity of the Institute and the space of the Theatre for that exhibit provided a transitional dovetail between both cultural institutions and their impact on Spain’s use of

7. “poderoso elemento de influencia, nada despreciable en estos momentos en que todo sacrificio será poco para mantener con tesón los intereses españoles en la competencia llegada hoy a un periodo agudo con el presentimiento de estar próxima la crisis en que habrá que resolverse la decisiva situación de Tánger.” Bernabé López García, Centenario del Teatro Cervantes de Tánger: una aventura patriótica 1913-2013 (Tanger: Khbar Bladna, 2014), 30
8. “alejar la posibilidad de que pudiera caer [el teatro] en manos de una empresa que, por no ser española, extranjerizaría el espectáculo y viniera a hacer fracasar el patriótico propósito al calor del cual se levantó dicho coliseo.” López García, Centenario, 31.
9. founded in 1923.
10. López García, Centenario, 227.
soft power. The most recent decision regarding the Cervantes theatre, still perceived as a Spanish cultural icon in Tangier’s downtown, was its donation to the Moroccan government which was approved on February 8, 2019 by the Spanish government’s Council of Ministers. With a caveat of being returned to Spain if the Moroccan government does not fulfil its obligation to refurbish it, within the contract was also a promise that Spanish programming would continue to be included in the theatre’s productions. It appears that the Cervantes is en route for being refurbished after sitting in a state of ruin for decades. However, some people see this donation to Morocco as ‘Spain abandoning Tangier’ as was denounced in El Mundo’s headline in 2015.

Since the founding of the Instituto Cervantes institutes throughout Morocco in 1993, Spanish cultural productions in Tangier have been presented at the Instituto Cervantes’ theatre, in a compound on an intersection in the Ville Nouvelle popularly known as Iberia by Tanjawis that houses the Juan Ramón Jiménez school, the Spanish Consulate and the Cervantes Institute’s classrooms, library and theatre. Their cultural activities include concerts, round tables, films, conferences and exhibits at a nearby gallery space. On occasion, the Cervantes presents a concert that includes Sephardi repertoire, a conference cycle on Moroccan Judeo-Spanish as well as an exhibit in January 2012 of the library’s collection of Moroccan Jewish history and literature with a
16-page catalogue of their holdings.\textsuperscript{18} In February of 2014 an exhibit entitled \textit{Los Hispano judíos de Marruecos} was organised with the Centro Sefarad Israel in Madrid. This was met with protests opposite the gallery, characterised in the press as a sit-in and by the Jews in attendance as virulent anti-Israel activists who lined the street yelling aggressive slogans as they walked in to the inauguration.\textsuperscript{19} The vocal presence of what was appeared to be anti-Jewish and not just anti-Israel protesters greatly unnerved the few local Jews who were in attendance that evening. Rachel Muyal, who had been the manager of the \textit{Librairie des Colonnes} in Tangier and active until her death in 2020 in Tangier’s cultural scene confided in me later that week saying that the protests “made me feel like Tangier has changed so much I can hardly recognise it. I cannot understand why they were protesting against an exhibit about us, about the Judaism of Tangier.”\textsuperscript{20}

The same exhibit was inaugurated some months later in Casablanca at the Cervantes’ Institute exhibition space across from the \textit{Parque de la Ligue Arabe}, with the President of the Jewish Community of Casablanca in attendance, the nonagenarian Boris Toledano. I was invited in my capacity as singer of Moroccan Judeo-Spanish, to provide a short introductory concert of Moroccan songs. Moroccan television Channel 1 interviewed both Mr. Toledano and myself, along with the director of the Cervantes in Casablanca.

The full complexity of the scene is better understood when taking the layered information of who Mr. Toledano was vis-à-vis Spain and Morocco, in addition to the role that including a live performance of the Judeo-Spanish repertoire had for those attending in the construction of a Spanish enclave within Morocco’s national culture. Boris Toledano was originally from Larache, a coastal city in the Spanish Protectorate. As an adolescent he went to Spain for his studies and found himself caught there during the civil war. He joined the republicans and fought


\textsuperscript{20} Phone conversation with the author, February 2014.
against Franco, which meant that when he wanted to return to Morocco, he was forced to settle in the French Protectorate, not being able to enter Spanish controlled Larache until after Moroccan Independence. Once in Casablanca, he built a manufacturing business and after his retirement became the President of the Casablanca Jewish Community. One of his sons, Sidney Toledano, was until recently the CEO of Dior. Mr. Toledano was very respected in Morocco within both Muslim and Jewish communities. A few months before his death in 2016 at 97 years old, Mr. Toledano was decorated for his contribution to Spanish democracy at a private ceremony with the Spanish Ambassador. In an interview with him, when pressed about his activities as a young fighter, he stressed that it was an ‘accident’ of fate that he found himself in Spain during that time, and that he was very young – almost as if he were distancing himself from any behaviour that could be construed to be radical. Notwithstanding, the Spanish saw his actions as a demonstration of his commitment to democratic principles and anti-fascism.

Judeo-Spanish songs from Northern Morocco have become currency of the symbolic power of the historic ties of Morocco’s Jewish community to Spain and Spanish intellectual history. They are occasionally deployed by Spanish cultural institutions to establish the undeniable links of Morocco’s Haketia (and other) speaking Jews to Spain. During the opening of the exhibition in Casablanca when I sang the Moroccan classic haketia Romance Rahel Lastimoza, Mr. Toledano joined in loudly with great gusto, gesticulating the text out for the audience and the cameras, proud of the showcasing by the Spanish government of what he expressed was a locally specific Moroccan Jewish cultural history and music. However, the exhibit clearly stated in its title that the haketia speaking Jews were “Hispano-Jewish” or Jews that belonged within the cultural and political purview of Spain. This nuance was not lost on Zhor Rehihil, the curator of the Moroccan

22. A few years after this exhibit in 2015, Spain offered citizenship to descendants of Jews who had been expelled. The first wave of applications had many Jews living in Morocco, some who decided to change their main residence to southern Spain while maintaining the family business in Morocco.
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Jewish Museum in Casablanca,\textsuperscript{23} who deemed the title misplaced and an insult to the Moroccanness of these Jews.

The difference between both inaugurations may have been that in Casablanca, Laura Gutiérrez Tejón, the cultural director of the Cervantes, understood that an event about Moroccan Jews that included music and an older respected figure on national television could link the historical claims of Spain to a portion of Morocco’s Jews to the current national discussion about diversity following the 2011 Constitution.\textsuperscript{24} The traditional Jewish songs in \textit{Haketia}, generally the domain of the private and communal sphere, were broadcast on radio and television linking Morocco to Spain through its Jews. This example is one of many contemporary results of a century-long campaign of philo-Sephardism that has been built in great part through musicology and the relationship of Spain to the musical repertoires of the Sephardi Jews in North Africa.

\textbf{Spanish philo-Sephardism}

In the early XX\textsuperscript{th} Century Spanish intellectuals began a public discussion regarding the cultural loss of the Moroccan Jewish community. By then, French culture and the Alliance schools were well established.\textsuperscript{25} France was the principal influence to bring upon the secularisation of Moroccan Jews through the school system of the \textit{Alliance Israélite Universelle}. Being connected to the Alliance schools was a manner to further the influence of French culture without promoting assimilation. The schools taught French culture, academic subjects such as science, mathematics and literature as well as Jewish religious subjects and the

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\item \textsuperscript{23} Personal communication, July 2014.
\end{itemize}
Hebrew language. Moroccan alumni of the Alliance saw themselves as a “Modern manifestation of Moroccan Jewry.”

At exactly the moment that the AIU was establishing a foothold in Morocco, Spain was reconsidering North Africa as the next center for its colonial expansion. From the time of the Spanish-Moroccan War of 1859-1860 until the period of Moroccan independence, Spanish colonial writers and politicians pointed to Spain’s interfaith past as evidence that the country was ideally suited to lead the European colonisation of North Africa. In 1908 at the Second Africanist Congress in Zaragoza, D. Wenceslao Orbea affirmed:

“We must counter the influence of French schools that so assiduously support the “Alliance Universelle” and in parallel, the Spanish government should create schools in Tangier, Tetuan, Larache, Rabat, Mogador, Safi, Casablanca and wherever it should be necessary. In this manner we will be able to enhance our influence, attracting both Moors and Hebrews that are today going off the path because of the education they receive in foreign schools and that don’t only affect indigenous children, but the children of Spaniards for lack of their own schools. I solicit that we create a National League for the propagation of Spanish in all of North Africa, where thousands of families conserve with affection the language that their ancestors gave them.”

Within the papers of José Benoliel, the groundbreaking haketia scholar from Tangier from the early 20th century, are a series of letters

28. “Precisa contrarrestar la influencia de las escuelas francesas que con tanto empeño sostiene la “Alliance Universelle,” y para ello el Gobierno español debería crear grupos escolares en Tánger, Tetuán, Larache, Rabat, Mogador, Safi, Casablanca y donde quiera que se estime necesario. Así se logrará acrecentar nuestra influencia, atrayendo a los moros y los hebreos, que hoy se desvían por virtud de las enseñanzas que reciben en las escuelas extranjeras, y que no sólo afectan a los indígenas sino a los hijos de españoles por carecer estos de escuela propia. Solicito que se procure crear una Liga Nacional para la propagación del español en todo el Norte de África, donde millares de familias conservan cariñosamente el habla que les legaron sus antepasados.” Manuel Ortega, Los Hebreos en Marruecos (Málaga: Algazara, 1994, re-edited from the original 1919), 272.
from Angel Pulido, who soon after went on to publish *Españoles sin Patria y la Raza Sefardí* (*Spaniards without a Nation and the Sephardi Race*) using some of the material Benoliel sent to him, as well as other Sephardi Judeo-Spanish speakers from around the Mediterranean basin. On May 23, 1904, Angel Pulido wrote a letter to José Benoliel, the Sephardi philologist from Tangier living in Lisbon. This first letter of Angel Pulido was asking for materials to be sent to the philologist Ramón Menéndez Pidal. In this letter he was thanking him for sending him some books and telling him that Ramón Menéndez Pidal wanted to contact him regarding literary information. What we know from the Menendez Pidal archive is that Benoliel proceeded to send him many texts of Sephardi romances from Tangier, which Menendez Pidal included in his first compilation of Moroccan Judeo-Spanish repertoire, launching the terrain of research for what was to become a detailed and lengthy relationship of Spanish scholars to Moroccan Judeo-Spanish repertoire during the 20th century. However, the foundation of Menéndez Pidal’s study was the hispanicity of Sephardi repertoire, not their local value. The materials collected from Benoliel and his informants, and later from Tomás Navarro Tomás’ trips to Larache and Alcazarquivir in 1915-1916 gave each piece a classification as belonging to one of the romances within the Catálogo Menéndez Pidal (CMP), with a number and ur-text which functioned as model. Anything that strayed from the textual model established by Menéndez Pidal from previously published volumes was subsequently described as ‘truncated,’ ‘contaminated’ or ‘incomplete.’ This manner of approaching the local variants of Sephardi romances establishes that the ‘correct’ and ‘complete’ versions come from a Spanish historic source, legitimizing the complete ownership of the repertoire by Spanish intellectual and literary history. The use of the catálogo’s numbering system is still the only one in use today for Sephardi romance studies.

First letter of Angel Pulido to José Benoliel. Special Collections University of California Los Angeles Collection 1625, Box 13, folder 2.
Angel Pulido writes a second letter to Benoliel when a project to use the materials to link Sephardim and their culture throughout the Mediterranean to Spain becomes more apparent. The text that shows us his desire to use pan-Mediterranean Sephardi materials as part of the Spanish political project is few months later, from September 1904 and it reads thus:

Madrid 22 - 9 - 1904

Mr. Dr. José Benoliel

My esteemed friend and sir: I now have your photograph and graciously kind letter. I am overwhelmed with your praises that are not deserved. I am a humble lover of humanity, of my country and the fraternal spirit between peoples. I do what I can, which is very little. I have read your biography with great interest, which I will use for my second book which (God willing) I will publish in due course. For now, I am trying to establish personal connections with all the populations that have Spanish Israelites: later I will formulate that questionnaire which you so discreetly indicated, and which I have been thinking about. Do you have any friends in Sofia, Argentina, the Holy Land
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(Jerusalem, Tiberias...) Spanish Israelites? I would appreciate any personal indication.

I hope to receive the information that you have offered, and which shall be one more favour which I owe you. You are very cordial, and your friendship flatters me greatly. Today I will say no more. Please receive a strong and friendly handshake in the expression of the affectionate recognition sent to you by the very attentive Angel Pulido. (Collection 1625, Box 13 Folder 2, Special Collections, University of California Los Angeles).

Since Angel Pulido’s seminal chance meeting with the Sephardi Haim Bejarano from Bucharest, while on a ship on the Danube in 1903 (Cantera Ortíz de Urbina 1958, 4), it would seem that he had matured his ideas and discussions with other Sephardim so as to formulate a larger project, which would form the backbone of his work in the upcoming years. His political project got extensive support, even being supported by Benito Pérez Galdos and Miguel de Unamuno.

Sr. Dr. José Benoliel.
Mi estimado amigo y señor: en mi poder su retrato y apreciable carta. Me abruma Ud. con elogios ni merecidos. Soy un modesto amante de la Humanidad, de mi patria y del espíritu de confraternidad entre los pueblos. Hago lo que puedo, que es muy poco. He leído con mucho interés su biografía, que me servirá para el segundo libro que (dios mediante) publicaré más adelante. Por el momento estoy proporcionándome relaciones personales con las poblaciones donde hay israelitas españoles: mas adelante formularé ese cuestionario que Ud. tan discretamente me indica, y en el cual ya he pensado. Tiene Ud. amigos en Sofía, Argentina, Tierra Santa (Jerusalén, Tiberiade…) israelitas españoles? Agradecería alguna indicación personal.
Espero recibir esos datos que me ofrece, y que será un favor más que deberá a los suyos. Ud. es muy amable y su amistad me lisonjea. Por hoy no le digo más. Reciba con la expresión de mi reconocimiento un cariñoso apretón de manos que le envía su attmo. Angel Pulido (Collection 1625, box 13, folder 2. Special Collections University of California Los Angeles).

This relationship had started even before the Spanish protectorate had, but since the late XIX\textsuperscript{th} century Spanish educators and philologists were already trying to establish the hispanicity of Sephardi Jews throughout the Mediterranean basin, to facilitate the future expansionist policies of their countries. The hypocrisy of the Spanish philo-Sehhardism has been written about extensively in Ojeda Mata’s work on Sephardi ambivalent identities.

The Jews of the Protectorate, together with the Muslims, were “indigenized,” in contrast with the Jewish population of the Peninsula, which was “foreignized,” in a process which was initiated in the mid-20\textsuperscript{th} century, parallel to Spanish colonizing ambitions in north Africa and the “return” of Sephardim together with other Jews to the peninsula.\footnote{Los judíos del protectorado, junto con los musulmanes, fueron “indigenizados” en contraste con la población judía en la península, que fue “extranjerizada,” en un proceso que se inició a mediados del Siglo XIX, paralelo a las ambiciones coloniales españolas del norte de África, y al “regreso” de sefardíes, junto con otros judíos a la península. Maite Ojeda Mata, \textit{Identidades ambivalentes: Sefardíes en la España contemporánea} (Madrid: Sefarad Editores, 2018), 119.}
Jews in Spain were not included to a full extent within the nation, but Sephardi Jews throughout the Mediterranean basin were claimed as ‘Spaniards without a nation,’ as Pulido’s publication espoused. And the campaign for “the grand cause of the hispano hebrew reconciliation was the definite objective of all his activities… so that ancient resentments and that Spaniards – Christians and Jews – will embrace as reconciled brothers to form a great community.”32 Almost a century before on June 1, 1869 an article in the Spanish constitution had been approved, conceding liberty of religion in Spain, which is what allowed the re-establishment of a Jewish presence in Spain. It was a de facto “annulment” of the expulsions of both Jews and Muslims. However, only until 1917 did the first synagogue open in Madrid.33 The Jews living in Spain were seen as foreign elements, and this perceived foreignness was further supported by music and theatrical entertainment such as the popular “El niño judío,” a zarzuela which was premiered February 5, 1918 in the Apolo Theatre of Madrid is an orientalist plot that takes a Jewish family from Madrid to Aleppo to India in search of a long lost father. It is important to note that the Jewish names used in the plot correspond to Moroccan names (Barchimor and Barchilon), which would be familiar to the Spanish during these early years of the Protectorate, and not Syrian Jewish names. But the librettists’ choice of making neighboring Moroccan Jews distant and exotic, and thus placing them in Syria and India, creates an interesting dynamic of distance between the “Spanish” Jew in Madrid and the Spanish Madrileño audiences. The ambivalent relationship towards Jews in Spain oscillated during this period between philo-sefardism, with the embrace of Spanish cultural elements within local Judaism and anti-semitism for any Jew that did not present clear Spanish cultural traces.

Pulido’s 1905 book Españoles sin Patria y la Raza Sefardi, Spaniards without a nation and the Sephardi race, underlines the hispanicity of Sephardim living throughout the Mediterranean basin. The shared past of medieval convivencia seemed to be the perfect backdrop for a cultural and political reclaiming of the Sephardim in

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neighbouring territories. This political, military and cultural reclaiming was achieved through philologists and military men who were stationed in various countries, such as Manuel Manriques de Lara who was both, and was among the first to gather ethnomusicological materials in the early part of the XXth century. A pan-Mediterranean effort began soon after to compile the *Romancero Sefardi*, stimulated partially by Ramón Menéndez Pidal. These efforts to gather Judeo-Spanish repertoire were initiated in Spain and permitted the voyages of Manuel Manrique de Lara. He traveled to Tanger, Tetuan, Larache and Ksar el Kebir in 1915 and 1916 to collect romances for the *Archivo Menéndez Pidal* and which had already received materials from José Benoliel before the collection was published in 1907. The focus of these trips to gather material was to do a sort of archaeology of texts, such as the search for a text heard by Branthôme in Spain in 1564 and that could not be traced in XVIth and XVIIth century folios. Menéndez Pidal had “found” it within the romance collection. It is known today as *El marido prisionero* or ¿Cómo no cantáis la bella? However, not all versions were as “worthy” as others in the reconstruction of this textual past as Menéndez Pidal states:

“The current versions of Salonika, Sarajevo and Larissa are short and generally contaminated with the romance of Las señas del marido. The one from Tangier and those from the manuscripts from Sarajevo in Rabbinic characters [solitreo] from the second half of the XVIIIth century, are more extensive.”

Further fieldwork projects and publications followed including Manuel Ortega (1919), José Benoliel (1922), Zarita Nahón (1929),

34. “Las versiones actuales de Salónica, Sarajevo y Larissa son breves y en general contaminadas con el romance de Las señas del marido. La de Tánger y las sacadas de dos manuscritos de Sarajevo en caracteres rabinicos de la segunda mitad del s. XVIII, son más extensas.” https://cuestadelzarzal.blogia.com/2010/081401-9.-manrique-de-lara-el-romancero-de-las-jud-oss-de-marruecos-y-de-la-pen-nsula-y.php; last accessed April 12, 2020 at 13:10.
36. Manuscript for José Benoliel’s “Dialecto Judeo-hispano-marroquí o hakitía,” in UCLA Special collections, Box 10.
37. Nahon completed a fieldwork research trip to Tangier, at the insistence of Franz Boas, Nahón’s Professor at Columbia University. The materials from her collection were eventually published posthumously in 1977 by Samuel Armistead and Joseph Silverman in *Romances judeo-españoles de Tánger recogidos par Zarita Nahón*. Madrid: Cátedra-Seminario Menéndez Pidal, 1977.
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Henrietta Yurchenco (1956),38 Samuel Armistead and Joseph Silverman (1962),39 Paul Bénichou (1968),40 Manuel Alvar (1969),41 Judith Cohen (1992) and others. My own field recordings (2007-2018)43 made one hundred years after the original collections, give a sense of the major loss of repertoire and its dramatic textual diminution from the XXth century versions in Morocco, even though many ritual and identity forming roles have been maintained intact. Even Mair José Bernadete’s study from the eastern Mediterranean repertoire early XXth century in New York44 elicited the question if the romances should be considered exclusively as a Hispanic trace within Sephardi culture:

“Is it fair to affirm that the songs of the Spanish Jews have a purely Hispanic interest? The fact that they continued to be sung for more than four centuries far from the homeland permits an assumption that, at some point, they assumed their own function in the small Mediterranean theocracies where the expelled ones settled after 1492.”45

38. Field work to Tetuan and Tangier in 1956 led to the publication of a recording entitled Ballads, wedding songs and piyyutim of the Sephardic Jews of Tetuan and Tangier. The archival recordings are deposited at the Library of Congress in Washington DC. The recording was published in 1983, under the following publisher number: FE 4208 Folkways.
39. During their fieldwork to Morocco in the early sixties they encountered events later describes so: “There were numerous instances during our fieldwork when informants had difficulty in recalling a certain ballad tune, only to remember it perhaps later in the course of the interview or after having begun to recite the text. Several informants had completely forgotten specific tunes,” (Armistead & Silverman, 1986: 31)
41. Alvar, Endechas judeo-españolas.
42. Judith Cohen’s main fieldwork with Moroccan Judeo-Spanish has been in Canada, but she carried out various research trips from the 1970s until 2018, recording Moroccan music.
43. My field recordings were the basis for the founding of KHOYA: archive sonore du Maroc juif and for my Ph.D., granted in 2018 at INALCO. An article with its main conclusions is soon to appear as “Jewish Music in Northern Morocco and the Building of Sonic Identity Boundaries” in The Journal for North African Studies, 2021, Forthcoming.
44. His dissertation was submitted to Columbia University in 1923, but only published in 1981 by Samuel Armistead and Joseph Silverman.
45. ¿Es justo afirmar que las canciones de los judíos españoles tienen un interés puramente hispánico? El que hayan seguido siendo cantadas durante más de cuatro siglo lejos de la madre patria permite suponer que, en un momento dado, asumieron una función propia en las pequeñas teocracias mediterráneas de los desterrados de 1492. Mair José Bernadete, Hispanismo de los Sefardíes levantinos (Madrid: Aguilar, 1963), 112.
However, to complicate matters, during the Protectorate, the Sephardic Jews of northern Morocco often identified culturally with the Spaniards that had come to live there. Luna Benzaquen, recalls how she would go to El Teatro Español in Tetuan as a child, dressed “como una andaluza.”

“I remember when I was a child I would go with my parents and brother to the Teatro Español to hear the great vedettes from Spain. My mother dressed me up like an andaluza and we would go to hear coplas. I still love coplas to this day and don’t miss them on the Spanish television.”

The ambivalent relationship towards Jews in Spain oscillated during this period between philo-sefardism, with the embrace of Spanish cultural elements within local Judaism and anti-semitism for any Jew that did not present clear ‘Spanish’ cultural traces. Franco himself articulated this by saying “Thanks to God and the clear appreciation of the danger by our Catholic kings, we have for centuries been relieved of that nauseating burden.” The Sephardi Jews of Northern Morocco were “mere instruments in the hands of Spain’s geopolitical interests.” And during the period that Franco’s government was promoting the study of Jewish music in Sephardi communities Gil Benumeya indicted the inclusion of Jews in Andalucismo as the cause for its failure. Stating that “…to be a Jew, one must be born in that race. This error of attachment was the ruin for that regionalism, a romantic echo of an unreal Andalusia.”

46. Me acuerdo cuando era niña yendo con mis padres y mi hermano al Teatro Español para oír a las grandes vedettes de España. Mi madre me vestía como una andaluza, y salíamos a oír las coplas. Me fascinan las coplas, hasta hoy no me las pierdo en la televisión Española. KHOYA: Jewish Morocco Sound Archive interview. Interview from May 2012, Tangier.
49. “Pero cometieron [los regionalistas] el error suicida de confundir un poco lo oriental y hacer con ello un revoltijo disparatado sin sentido geográfico. Pues siendo hebreos por las calles de Tetuán, se les ocurrió meter en su programa la simpatía a los hebreos o judíos, que confundían con los marroquíes. Confusión absurdo, pues los judíos eran un pueblo extraño que no se mezclaba con el andaluz y vivía en barrios separados. El cristiano podía hacerse moro o el moro cristiano: pero ser judío, había que nacer en esa raza. Este error de bulto fué la ruina de aquel regionalismo, eco romántico de una Andalucía irreal.” Rodolfo Gil Benumeya, Marruecos andalu (Madrid: Vicesecretaría de Educación Popular, 1942), 202-3.
Looking at the ‘Other’ through the Ear

Felipe Pedrell’s four volume *Cancionero Musical Español* from 1922 includes material collected from the oral tradition throughout Spain, including some from Menéndez Pidal’s work, but remains completely silent regarding Sephardi repertoire. His racist attitude becomes exceedingly strident when he writes about potential influence of Arabic music on Spanish traditions where he denies any possible influence, saying that “They did not, I repeat, influence [Spanish music] in anything essential. They were the ones influenced.”50 This attitude is similar for the Jews. The conception of the scholars building Spanish national popular musical language was that Spain gave its cultural riches to Jews and Muslims unidirectionally.

Politically, Franco established centers for the study of Arabic and Jewish humanities in Spain and Morocco. The Instituto Benito Arias Montano de Estudios Hebraicos, Sefardíes y de Oriente Próximo, was founded in 1941. In the 1980s, the Institute integrated into the Philology Institute of the CSIC (later Instituto de Lenguas y Culturas del Mediterráneo of CSIC). The Instituto de Estudios Africanos was founded in 1945 and was part of the CSIC to study the Spanish colonies in Africa. But, as Hisham Aidi explained “After Franco’s death, the Spanish state began to reassess the dictatorship’s historic amity with the Arab world and hostility with Israel, and its leaders are still trying to negotiate a place between American and European approaches to the Orient and their differing visions of the Jew’s and Arab’s relationship to the West.”51

Most of the Spanish publications on Moroccan Jewish music from the last seventy years were published by one of these two research institutes.52 Analysing the language used within the titles of these

50. La música, pues, no debe nada esencial a los árabes ni a los moros. Existía antes que ellos invadieron el suelo ibérico. Quizá no hicieron más que reformar algunos rasgos ornamentales comunes al sistema oriental y persa, de dó proviene el suyo árabe. No influyeron, repito, en nada esencial. Ellos fueron los influidos. Felipe Pedrell, *Cancionero Musical Popular Español*. IV volumes (Cataluña: Eduardo Castells Editor, 1922), 84.
studies, early on, during the last years of the Spanish Protectorate, Larrea Palacín’s study on Jewish ritual music (1954) is entitled “Hispano Jewish ritual songs,” linking the Jews from Northern Morocco undeniably to Spain, even through their religious repertoire. However, the earlier volume on romances (1952) is simply entitled “Romances from Tetuan,” as if to say that the very Spanish nature of the romance did not put into question the fact of its ‘hispanicity.’ Paloma Díaz-Mas’ recent studies on Moroccan Jewish repertoire (2013 and 2019) both undeniably link Moroccan Sephardi sung poetry to Spanish intellectual history, continuing the narrative of a Spanish based culture for these Moroccan Jews. Musical repertoire that is not linked to *Haketía* and the Spanish philological angle has not been studied by Spanish scholars from the CSIC. Arabic or Hebrew language ‘*Ala* music which some Jews performed even within the Spanish Protectorate, was not studied as one of the Jewish repertoires, but exclusively in Arabic as one belonging only to Moroccan Muslims. This division and distinction through the musicology of Spanish scholars demonstrates how their approach to Moroccan Jews was one to claim the Sephardim as their own to legitimize their expansionist politics.

_Carril and Margarita Cantarero. 4 vols (Madrid: CSIC, IV, 1969), 2127-40); Manuel Alvar, *Endechas judeo-españolas* (Madrid: Instituto Arias Montano, 1969), *Cantos de boda judeo-españolas* (Madrid: CSIC, 1971); Paloma Díaz-Mas (Paloma Díaz-Mas and Maria Sánchez Pérez, *Los sefardies y la poesía tradicional hispánica del siglos XVIII: el Cancionero de Abraham Israel* (Gibraltar, 1761-1770) (Madrid: CSIC., 2013; “El Romancero, vínculo entre sefardies y españoles,” in *Rostruos judios del occidente medieval* (Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 2019), 29-52); and Edwin Seroussi (*Ruinas sonoras de la modernidad: La canción popular sefardi en la era post-tradicional* (Madrid: CSIC., 2019). Interestingly though, Susana Weich Shahak who has been the most prolific collector of Moroccan repertoire has not published any of her books in Spain with them, her work has been published by Editorial Alpuerto in Madrid, the Jewish Music Research Institute from Hebrew University in Jerusalem and Gaon Books. On November 22, 2016 Prof. Weich Shahak was granted the *Órden del Mérito Civil* of Spain, an order established in 1929, which is, along with the Royal Order of Isabel the Catholic, one of the two orders granted by Spain’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was given to her in a ceremony at the Spanish Embassy in Tel Aviv.

53. Larrea-Palacín, *Canciones.*
54. Larrea-Palacín, *Romances.*
56. In their titles, both studies link Sephardi repertoire to Spanish literature: *Sefhardim and Traditional Hispanic Poetry of the 18th century: the Songbook of Avraham Israel* (Gibraltar 1761-1770) and “The Romancero: link between the Sephardim and the Spanish.”
Looking at the ‘Other’ through the Ear

The most recent and dramatic legal decision regarding the difference between Spain’s relationship to their history with Jews and Muslims was the decision in 2015 to grant Spanish citizenship to descendants of Jews who had suffered the expulsion. On the website of the Spanish Ministry of Justice it specifies that it is for the “descendants of Sephardim of Spanish origin.” It was announced during Spain’s most difficult economic recession and has been felt by many as a continuation of anti-Semitic tropes regarding Jews and money. One reason that it seems to have been a calculated decision is because descendants of the Moriscos expelled in the early XVIIth century have not been offered citizenship. Some Moroccan Andalusis have claimed that for historic consistency, they should be offered citizenship as well. Not everyone agrees, one Sephardi Moroccan with Spanish citizenship said to me: “the difference is that we were expelled, they fought a war against them and lost, it’s not the same.”

At the conference for Sephardi studies which was held at the Centro Superiores de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) in Madrid the summer of 2014, the opening plenary included a representative from the Real Academia de la Lengua Española, the Royal Academy for Spanish Language, establishing with an official representation, the importance of Judeo-Spanish culture, language and studies to the Spanish polity. The organising committee was approached about having a Moroccan diplomatic presence at the opening, but answered by saying that since it was an academic meeting, there was not the tradition of including diplomats at the opening events. However, the Real Academia Española, as an official arm of ‘Spanish-ness’ did not seem to fall under this category. In October of 2019, ladino was voted in to be a branch of the Real Academia, with one of their officials even stating that they should not have their own independent academy, but be under the tutelage of the Spanish. Some of the organising scholars from the meeting at the CSIC

58. Z.B. Private conversation December, 2015, Casablanca.
59. AGM private correspondence, June 2014.
are the officials of this Israeli-based branch of the *Real Academia de la Lengua Española*. It appears that the Jewish scholars themselves have given up the independent and local natures of their sources, to connect themselves to the Spanish ’homeland’ even when based in Israel, which has been the central point for study of Jewish languages in the last generation. This recent ’arrival point’ of Sephardi Studies coming full circle to be based within a Spanish central institution demonstrates that the current study of Sephardi repertoires, be they Maghrebi or Eastern Mediterranean still operate under Spain’s tutelage, in a replica of early scholarship during the time of *protégé* politics.

In the summer of 2018, Spanish television launched a documentary program which had been filmed during most of 2017 throughout Europe and North Africa. Its name was taken from one of the most common *haketía* refrains: *Tu boca a los cielos*, which means from your mouth to heaven. The main character was the very Rachel Muyal who had expressed her dismay in 2014 at the manifestation across from the Cervantes Institute’s exhibit. In it, Muyal thanks the Catholic monarchs for the expulsion in 1492, saying that only through that expulsion were her and her ancestors able to create wonderful lives in the diaspora. For her, the Judaism of Tangier was unique and precious, the language that combined darija, hebrew and spanish and the songs that she heard her aunt and the wife of Rabbi Yamin Cohen singing in their living room of the Boulevard Pasteur were still haunting her memory. She said to me in 2008 that she would live and be buried in Tangier until her final day.

Albeit Rachel’s attachment to Morocco, the editing of the movie showed a Moroccan Judaism that was at its base connected to Spain, Spanish culture, music, language and history. In a private correspondence to the director of the film I asked him why his documentary’s angle had to erase the suffering caused for centuries by the expulsion and inquisition, adding an insult of thanking the monarchs that had caused such a calamity for thousands of Jews who were displaced, died in the voyage or converted in order to save their livelihoods. His answer said to the contrary, he was still amazed that Spanish television had finally financed a story on the Jews, and that it was probably the only way they would support the retelling of this part of their history, in their
educational manuals at school they only teach them the “vanquishing of the Arabs and the conquest of America” and nothing on the expulsion of the Jews. The philo-Sephardi movement of the XIXth century culminates in recent years with mass culture programming on Sephardi Jewish music and history and the offering of citizenship to their displaced descendants. Within this recent chapter of Spain’s relationship to its former protégés the use of a collapsing memory that ignores the centuries between today and al-Andalus continues to serve current political and nationalistic trends.

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61. Private email correspondence from September 19, 2019.


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